

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of sterilizing a surface using a mobile, enclosed flamer comprising a hood, said hood being open at an inlet, and at least one burner, and skids for maintaining a height above said surface, said method comprising:

- (a) transporting the flamer to location;
- (b) setting operatively, and at least partially, supporting the flamer on the skids; and
- (c) setting a flame to the at least one burner such that the flame is contained within the hood at a same time that said hood is not sealed by virtue of the open inlet; and
- (d) sterilizing the surface on which the flamer is operatively supported.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **1** wherein the flamer is moved about the surface while sterilizing.

3. (Original) The method of claim **1** wherein the flamer additionally comprises wheels and is drawn by a vehicle.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim **1** wherein a burner angle relative to the hood, is adjustable adjusted during sterilization.

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for sterilizing a surface, said apparatus comprising:

- (a) a hood for containing a flame;
- (b) at least one burner situated under the hood, said burner oriented so a flame direction is substantially horizontal; and
- (c) a hitch for attaching said flamer to a tractor; and
- (d) skids operatively affixed to the hood and operatively engaged to the surface to be sterilized.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim **5** wherein said hood comprises an external frame and a skin.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the hitch is a three-point hitch for attaching said flamer to a tractor.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the hitch is a quick coupler for attaching said flamer to a tractor.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 5, additionally comprising wheels for bearing a weight of the flamer, wherein the hitch is a tongue for attaching said flamer to a tractor.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 5 additionally comprising a fuel tank operably operatively mounted on the hood, said fuel tank containing fuel for the burner.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 5 additionally comprising a fuel tank operably operatively mounted on a tractor.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 5 additionally comprising a pivot for adjusting an angle of the at least one burner, said angle being measured relative to the hood.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 5 additionally comprising ground engaging wherein the skids supporting at least some of a weight of the flamer when in operation and engaging engage the ground surface to be sterilized at all times during operation of the flamer.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the skids are adjustable as to height.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 5 additionally comprising insulation over the skin on a side of the skin opposite the at least one burner.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim **10** additionally comprising a heat shield disposed between the hood and the fuel tank.

17. (Currently Amended) A method of sterilizing poultry litter, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) holding poultry in confinement such that litter accumulates to form a surface;
- (b) transporting a flamer to the litter surface;
- ~~(c) setting the flamer on skids on the surface;~~
- ~~(d)~~ setting a flame to the burner such that the flame is contained within a hood; ~~and~~
- ~~(e)~~ heating the poultry litter sufficiently to kill microbes and bacteria; ~~and~~
- ~~(e)~~ moving the flamer over the surface while heating the poultry litter.

18. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for sterilizing a surface, said apparatus comprising:

- (a) a hood for containing a flame;
- ~~(b) an open inlet of the hood comprising a hood opening such that the hood is not sealed to the surface;~~
- ~~(b)~~ a plurality of burners situated under the hood; and
- ~~(e)~~ a hitch for attaching said flamer to a tractor.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim **18** wherein the apparatus has a forward direction corresponding to a towing vehicle forward direction, the apparatus additionally comprising:

- (a) rake teeth disposed forward of the plurality of burners and under the hood; and
- (b) a barrier disposed between the rake teeth and the plurality of burners and under the hood.

20. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the flamer additionally comprises an open outlet, the method additionally comprising not sealing the hood by virtue of the open outlet.

21. (New) An apparatus for sterilizing a surface, said apparatus comprising:

- (a) a hood surrounding the surface to be sterilized;
- (b) a plurality of burners situated within the hood, each of said plurality of burners oriented so a flame direction is substantially horizontal; and
- (c) a hitch for attaching said flamer to a tractor.